

Te Mana Hononga: The power of connection

A framework for reducing restrictive practices in Aotearoa New Zealand

Service examples and additional resources

Service examples are all based on actual Aotearoa New Zealand quality improvement projects but have been anonymised to protect the privacy of the organisations involved.

(Where *Let's get real* is referred to, this is in reference to the renamed [Keeping it real | Kia pono te tika.](#))



Mātau ā-wheako: Shaping services through lived experience



Service example: Co-design in action

This service embeds tāngata whai ora and whānau in every aspect of design and delivery. Advisory groups meet monthly, and whānau are paid for their time and expertise. Service changes, such as redesigning intake forms and waiting areas, are led by lived experience expertise.

Impact

- Service satisfaction scores rise significantly.
- Whānau report feeling “respected and heard.”
- Collaborative changes lead to faster engagement and fewer dropouts.

Resources

Keeping it Real | Kia Pono te Tika describes the values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills required for working effectively alongside tāngata whai ora and whānau experiencing addiction and/or mental health challenges. The framework reflects the Aotearoa New Zealand (Aotearoa) context and contemporary best practice. It complements professional competency frameworks and provides a foundational approach for kaimahi who are not guided by a professional competency framework.

- [Working alongside tāngata whai ora](#) - Guidance for culturally safe engagement and [Working with whānau e-learning](#) - Supports whānau-centred practice.
- [Let's get real – inclusion e-learning modules](#) - Includes trauma-informed and diversity modules.
- [A guide to the consumer, peer support, and lived experience workforce in mental health and addiction settings](#) - Written for anyone involved with the consumer, peer support, and lived experience (CPSLE) workforce in mental health and addiction services in Aotearoa.

Rangatiratanga: Leading collective values-focused change and growth



Service example: Kaupapa Māori mental health service

At this service, leadership is shared across a collective of Māori clinicians, kaumātua, and tāngata whai ora representatives. The clinical director begins each week with a karakia and whakawhanaungatanga session for all kaimahi. Strategic decisions are made in hui that include whānau voices and cultural advisors. When reviewing restraint incidents, the leadership team prioritise mana-enhancing responses and ensure whānau are part of

the resolution process.

Impact:

- Restraint use drops by 40% in 12 months.
- Kaimahi report increased trust in leadership.
- Whānau engagement in service planning doubles.

Resources:

- [Arataki | A Keeping it real | Kia pono te tika approach to leadership](#) - Values-based leadership development.
- [Peer Coaching Micro-learning Series](#) - Short modules that equip leaders to apply the fundamentals of peer coaching.
- [Mahi a Atua](#) - A revolutionary approach to healing and mental health, grounded in Māori creation narratives and indigenous knowledge.

Whakapakari: Developing the workforce for collective wellbeing



Service example: A culturally safe workforce programme

This service has developed a workforce programme co-led by Māori and Pasifika educators. It includes modules on Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Fonofale, and vā relationships, alongside clinical skills. Workforce peer support is embedded, and cultural supervision is offered monthly. Kaimahi are encouraged to bring their whole selves to work, including cultural identity.

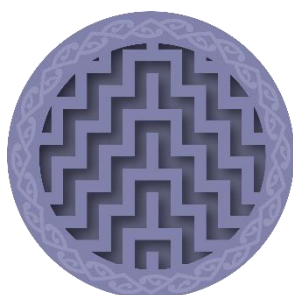
Impact:

- 95% of kaimahi have completed cultural safety training.
- Kaimahi retention has improved, especially among Māori and Pasifika kaimahi.
- Confidence in responding to cultural needs has increased.

Resources:

- [Let's get real e-learning modules](#) - Includes Working with Māori, whānau, and trauma-informed approaches.
- [CEP \(Co-existing mental health and addiction problems\) modules](#) - Integrated support across addiction and mental health.
- [Reflective practice e-learning](#) - Supports supervision and cultural reflection.
- [Reflective practice guides](#) - Includes information about different approaches and key elements to reflective practice.
- [Le Va Engaging Pasifika training](#) - Attend the training as a baseline to develop a professional development pathway of being responsive to Pacific.

Raraunga: Using data to improve equitable outcomes



Service example: Talanoa-informed data review

This service facilitates talanoa (conversation) sessions to interpret service data with Pasifika communities. The team disaggregate data by ethnicity and service type, and present findings using visual storytelling — graphs shaped like tapa motifs and narratives from service users. Feedback loops are built into the process, allowing whānau to co-design solutions based on the data.

Impact:

- Transparency and trust in data use increases.
- Pasifika service users report feeling “seen” in the data.
- Equity-focused changes are implemented in triage protocols.

Resources

- [Outcome Measures e-learning](#) - Includes HoNOS, ADOM, and case studies.
- [KPI Programme | Data outcomes | Te Pou](#) - Opportunities for Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora adult, child and youth mental health and addiction services and their nominated NGO partners to benchmark themselves against their peers.

Haumaru: Tools that promote safety and connection



Service example: Sensory and cultural toolkit

This centre has created a prevention toolkit that includes karakia recordings, sensory items with Māori and Pasifika designs, and peer-led calming strategies. Tāngata whai ora helped design the toolkit, which is available in every unit. Kaimahi are trained to use these tools before considering restrictive practices.

Impact:

- There is a 60% reduction in incidents requiring restraint.
- Tāngata whai ora report feeling safer and more respected.
- Kaimahi confidence in de-escalation has increased.

Resources:

- [Sensory modulation - Whakaāio ā-rongo](#) - E-learning module and associated resources.
- [SPEC \(Safe Practice Effective Communication\)](#) - National training programme.

Rauora: Healing and learning from harm



Service example: Restorative debriefing circles

A Pasifika service introduced talanoa-based debriefing circles after incidents. These are facilitated by Pasifika elders and include all involved — tāngata whai ora, whānau, and kaimahi. The circles begin with prayer and end with shared food. The focus is on healing, learning, and restoring relationships.

Impact:

- Tāngata whai ora feel encouraged and able to speak openly.
- Incidents are followed by meaningful change, not just documentation.
- Kaimahi report reduced burnout and improved team cohesion.

Resources:

- [Debriefing literature summary](#) - Evidence-informed guidance.
- [Trauma-informed and responsive approaches e-learning.](#)
- [Reflective Practice e-learning](#) - Includes supervision and trauma-informed approaches.